1899MNRAS..59..327.

MONTHLY NOTICES

OF THE

ROYAL ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY.

VOL. LIX. MARCH 10, 1899. No. 6

Professor G. H. DARWIN, M.A., LL.D., F.R.S., President, in the Chair.

Col. Thomas Davies Sewell, 29 Grosvenor Road, S.W.,

was balloted for and duly elected a Fellow of the Society.

The following candidates were proposed for election as Fellows of the Society, the names of the proposers from personal knowledge being appended :—

The Rev. Edward Lyon Berthon, M.A., St. Margaret's, Cupernham, Romsey, Hants (proposed by Sir Howard Grubb);

The Rev. Theodore Evelyn Reece Phillips, M.A. (Oxon.), Hendford Vicarage, Yeovil, Somerset (proposed by W. F. Denning).

One hundred and twenty presents were announced as having been received since the last ordinary meeting, including, amongst others :—

A. Berry, A short history of Astronomy, presented by the author; V. de Campigneulles, Observations of the eclipse of 1898 January 22, by the Jesuit Fathers of the Western Bengal Mission, presented by St. Xavier's College Observatory; A. H. Fison, Recent advances in Astronomy, and A. Laussedat, Recherches sur les instruments topographiques, tome 1, presented by the authors; Columbia University Observatory, New York, Collected

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Contributions, vol. i., presented by the Observatory; Potsdam Observatory, Publications, vol. 12, pt. 1, vol. 13, presented by the Observatory; E. J. Spitta, Photo-micrography, presented by the author; Mrs. Todd, Corona and Coronet, being a narrative of the Amherst Eclipse Expedition to Japan, 1896, presented by the author; The Second Washington Catalogue of Stars, presented by the U.S. Naval Observatory; Photographischer Mond-Atlas, part 4, presented by L. Weinek; Photographs of the total solar eclipse of 1898 January 22, presented by C. Burckhalter; Photographs of artificial lunar formations, presented by S. H. R. Salmon; Photographs of fields of stars showing trails of minor planets, &c., presented by Max Wolf.

Report of the Proceedings of the Sydney Observatory for 1898.*

Reference was made in the Report for 1897 to the difficulty introduced into our photographic work by the adoption of incandescent gas-burners for illuminating the city. The light given by these incandescent burners is powerfully actinic, and the dust and smoke of a great city reflects enough of this light to fog long-exposure plates.

To avoid this unexpected difficulty, the Government has granted a sum of money for the removal of the star camera from the city to the site selected some years since for the Observatory. The experiments then made proved that the atmosphere was very much clearer than in the city, so much so that a three hours' exposure there was equal to one of five hours in the city. Redhill, the place referred to, is 615 feet above the sea and eleven miles W.N.W. from the present Observatory.

Measurement of Photographic Plates.—An arrangement has been made by which the measurement of our star plates will at last be undertaken systematically.

The Governments of Victoria and New South Wales have granted the money necessary for measuring the photographic plates, and at a conference of the astronomers of Melbourne and Sydney it was decided to combine the money grants, with the object of making one complete measuring bureau, furnished with the most perfect measuring machines. The work will be done in Melbourne, and the staff is now being trained by Mr. Baracchi.

Transit Circle.—With the transit circle (only one observer) 1,355 transits and 511 meridian zenith distances have been observed. The computations of the meridian observations have

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* This report was received unfortunately too late for insertion in the Annual Report of the Council.

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